

Case 3260***Titanodamon johnstonii* Pocock, 1894 (currently *Damon johnstonii*; Arachnida, Amblypygi): proposed conservation of the specific name**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application, under Article 23.9.3 of the Code, is to conserve the widely used specific name *Titanodamon johnstonii* Pocock, 1894 (currently *Damon johnstonii*; family PHRYNICHIDAE) for a species of whip spider (Amblypygi) by suppressing its senior synonym *D. australis* Simon, 1886, that has been used doubtfully only once.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy: Amblypygi; PHRYNICHIDAE: *Damon*; *Damon johnstonii*; whip spiders.

1. Pocock (1894, p. 289) introduced the generic name *Titanodamon* (type species by original designation the new species *T. johnstonii*) for three new West African whip spider (Amblypygi) species (family PHRYNICHIDAE) and described *T. johnstonii* (pp. 291–292) on the basis of a number of specimens from rainforests of Nigeria, the mountains of Cameroon, Fernando Po and Gabon. The designated holotype, an adult male from Rio del Rez near Old Calabar (Nigeria), is deposited in The Natural History Museum, London (accession no. BMNH 1890.3.18.3).

2. Simon (1886, pp. 575–576) described *Damon australis* from a small specimen allegedly from ‘Santa Cruz de Patagonia’. The specimen is deposited in the Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle in Paris (without number and not marked as a type specimen). It clearly is an immature specimen of *T. johnstonii*. No other similar specimen has been recorded from South America since, and it is virtually certain that the neotropical locality is erroneous (see Weygoldt, 1999).

3. Kraepelin (1895, pp. 14–17) recognized only one species of *Titanodamon* to be valid, and he treated *T. johnstonii* as a subspecies of *T. medius* (Herbst, 1797) i.e. as *T. medius johnstonii* Pocock. On p. 19 of the same paper, he erroneously considered *Damon australis* to be a junior synonym of *D. variegatus* (Perty, 1834). However, in 1899 Kraepelin included the genus *Titanodamon* in *Damon* C.L. Koch, 1850 and considered *Damon johnstonii* to be a valid species.

4. Subsequent authors (e.g. Fage, 1939, p. 110; Fage, 1954, pp. 181–182; Lawrence, 1969, pp. 85–86) either retained the generic name *Titanodamon* only for *T. johnstonii* or followed Kraepelin (1899) in considering *Titanodamon* to be a junior synonym of *Damon* (e.g. Quintero, 1976).

5. The name *T. australis* (Simon, 1886) has been used only once (tentatively) by Fage (1939, p. 110). He discussed the possibility that it could represent a second species of *Titanodamon*, but he also said that it ‘s’agit malheureusement d’un

exemplaire jeune qui possède incontestablement tous les attributs du genre, mais qu'il est impossible de caractériser spécifiquement'.

6. In contrast, Pocock's (1894) specific name *T. johnstonii* has been used by all the authors cited above for the large and conspicuous West African species that is found between south-eastern Nigeria and Gabon. Further, all the identified West African specimens from various museums that I have studied are labelled *Damon johnstonii*. Although *T. australis* is a slightly older name than *T. johnstonii*, it has been used only once (and then doubtfully; see para. 5 above) and is based on one juvenile specimen attributed to the wrong continent. As a result, it would be destabilizing to adopt it in place of *T. johnstonii* even though it has priority.

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to suppress the name *australis* Simon, 1886, as published in the binomen *Damon australis*, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *johnstonii* Pocock, 1894, as published in the binomen *Titanodamon johnstonii* (specific name of the type species of *Titanodamon* Pocock, 1894);
- (3) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *australis* Simon, 1886, as published in the binomen *Damon australis* and as suppressed in (1) above.

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